

Chestnut-backed Chickadee



“For The Birds Challenge” – We All Won!

Speaking for our Board of Directors – WE CONCEDE! Flathead Audubon’s **members won** our end-of-the-year fundraising challenge. But only by a small feather. If you have been checking the bird feeders on the home page of our website, you really saw a race to the finish. Our goal was \$6,000 which we achieved, but several generous last minute donors came through to push our final total to **\$8,325.62!**



To every bird lover who helped Flathead Audubon to this

exciting finale, thank you, thank you! You will be able to see your generosity at work on the ground in the Flathead Valley, with school kids, exciting monthly programs, Owen Sowerwine Natural Area, the Birds of Prey Festival, field trips for all, even bird feeders at nursing homes. Give yourselves a pat on the back – we raise our binoculars to you!



Kay Mitchell, President

See the list of donors on page 8.

TWO NEW SPECIES SPOTTED AT OSNA

Two new species were recently added to the OSNA Bird List.

Jake Bramante found a Barred Owl near the southwest part of OSNA on Christmas day, about 50 feet outside the west boundary. Then a week later, on New Year’s day, he spotted a Pacific Wren just south of the OSNA border. Both species are marked with an * on the list, indicating they were “seen adjacent to or over, but not within OSNA”. The updated OSNA Bird List can be viewed on the Flathead Audubon website in the OSNA section.

If when you visit OSNA you observe either of these spe-



Jake Bramante

cies inside the Area, please let us know and we will remove the asterisks. Email your observation reports to Shawn Richmond at digests@centurytel.net. You can also send along any pictures you take; please indicate whether you are willing to let us use them in the Flathead Audubon newsletter and/or website.

And, of course, let us know if you observe a species not yet on the OSNA Bird List. That information, along with any pictures, should also be emailed to Shawn. Only four more new species are needed to bring the number on the list to 150.

by Linda Winnie

FEBRUARY FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, February 4, 2019, 6 PM. FAS Board of Directors Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome.

Monday, February 11, 2019, 7 PM. Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. All welcome. See page 3.

Saturday, February 9, 2019 10:00 AM-noon. Winter Birds and Tracks with Denny Olson. See page 5 for details.

Sunday, February 17, 2019, 10 AM-1 PM. The Great Backyard Bird Count. See page 5 for details.

Sunday, February 23, 2019, 9:30 AM meeting. Fur and Feathers, Tracking and Birding the Swan River Refuge with Diane Boyd. See page 5 for details.

BAT OF THE MONTH

Long-eared Myotis

By Lewis Young

At first glance, this bat is similar to several other small bats in Montana, but the name is a giveaway for a prominent feature that helps distinguish it. The ears are very large and long compared to the body size and extend 5 millimeters (0.2 inches) or more beyond the nose when gently laid forward. The ears themselves are more than 21 mm long (0.8 inches). The fur is usually dull brown to straw-colored and individual hairs are black at the base. Both the ears and wing membranes are black. Wingspan is 10-12 inches (25-30 centimeters), and weight is 5-8 grams (0.2-0.3 ounces). Life span can be 22 years.

Long-eared Myotis (*Myotis evotis*) range across most of the western U.S., southwestern Canada, and into Mexico. They are found all across Montana in suitable habitat.

These bats may be found in a diverse array of habitats including lowland, montane, and subalpine woodlands, forests, shrublands, meadows, wooded stream courses, and areas over water bodies. The author's experience in Montana is that Long-eared Myotis are most commonly found in or near forested areas with large, mature to old-growth trees. They are insectivorous eating primarily moths and beetles but also flies, lacewings, true bugs, and spiders. Prodigious quantities of insects are consumed each night. Pregnant or lactating females often eat their own weight. Typically emerging 10-40 minutes after dark, they feed for a period, then go to a night roost to digest and rest before going out again to feed before daylight, although the time of emergence and temporal pattern of foraging seems to vary among different locations or circumstances. Their wing structure makes them highly maneuverable. Besides hawking insects out of the air, they also glean prey from leaves and bark or off the ground. Their mobility also allows them to drink on the wing.

As with all other bats in Montana, echolocation is used to navigate in darkness and find food. Ultra-high frequency sounds are emitted from the mouth and the large ears detect the sound waves reflected off prey and inanimate objects. Long-eared Myotis echolocation calls are in the 30-80 kilohertz range, well above human hearing capability. They also have social calls at much lower frequencies that are audible to humans.



Sexes are segregated in summer with females in small maternity colonies of up to 30. Females have one young per year, usually born in late June or July, and return to previously used maternity roost areas. Mothers can fly with pups attached. Gestation is 50-90 days; the young can fly in 3-4 weeks and are weaned in 5-6 weeks. Breeding occurs in the fall before hibernation but

implantation and gestation is delayed until the following spring. Nonreproductive females and males generally roost singly or in small groups.

In summer during daylight hours, they roost in a variety of places such as tree cavities, under loose bark, rock fissures, stumps, and buildings. Roost sites may be switched frequently.

In winter they hibernate at sites that include caves, abandoned mines, and fissures in rocks and soil. Hibernation takes place from October to April and involves an extreme reduction in metabolic rate, heart rate, and respiratory rate that allows them to survive long periods of time without food. The heart rate drops from 200-300 beats per minute to 10 beats per minute, and they may go minutes without taking a breath. The body temperature can also drop to near freezing, depending on the temperature of the bat's surroundings. Other bodily functions also slow down, which reduces energy costs by about 98%. In this state of "torpor," bats are experts in high energy efficiency! During hibernation, bats cycle through periods of torpor interrupted by brief periods of arousal when their body temperatures return to normal for a few hours.



Long-eared Myotis are considered yearlong residents in Montana although very few hibernation sites are known. It is possible that some short distance migration occurs between summer and winter.

Their conservation status is considered secure due to the wide distribution and regular occurrence in suitable habitats. However, White-nose Syndrome, the cold-loving fungus that has killed millions of bats in the eastern U.S., may impact Long-eared Myotis when it reaches Montana sometime in the future.

Long-eared Myotis are not easily observed because of their nocturnal activities, but they are a valuable component of our wildlife diversity and play an important role in insect control at night.

February Program

Return of the Wolf to Montana

presented by
Dianne Boyd

Renowned wolf biologist Diane Boyd will present a program on the status of the wolf recovery program at the February 11, 2019 Flathead Audubon program from 7-9 PM at the Gateway West Community Room in Kalispell. Diane began studying wolf recovery in the Rockies when the first wolf walked down from Canada and successfully colonized northwestern Montana in 1979. Join Diane as she discusses how wolf recovery unfolded from this first colonizer to the present population of 2,000 wolves in the West: the challenges, the successes, and the future of wolves on the Montana landscape.

Diane Boyd began her wolf career with Dave Mech in Minnesota in 1977. She



Diane Boyd

moved to Montana in 1979 to study wolf recovery in the Rocky Mountains, and followed the population growth from 1 wolf to 2000 wolves at present in MT/ID/WY. Diane has collaborated on wolf research in MN, MT, MI, AZ, NM, BC, AB, Italy, Romania, and Ellesmere Island. She earned her MS and PhD degrees from the University of Montana researching wolf ecology, genetics, and the recolonization process. Diane has published 40 articles on wolf and carnivore ecology in scientific journals and popular literature. She currently works for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in Kalispell, Montana, as the Wolf/Carnivore Specialist.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

Bigfork CBC Totals 2018

The 45th annual Bigfork Christmas Bird Count was held Saturday, December 15th, under cloudy skies, periodic "snow bands," and strong SSE winds (10-17 mph) in the morning. The afternoon weather conditions were considerably better for birding, with good visibility and diminished winds. Snow depths were non-existent and/or limited to the eastern edges of the count circle; temperatures ranged from 32-43 degrees F. Rivers and lakes were mostly open and there was no ice on Flathead Lake. Thirty-three volunteer participants counted **22,697** individual birds of **88 species**, down from a record 98 species recorded last year. The overall number of birds increased from last year's total of 18,847 to 22,697 birds. There was no new bird species found this year on the count. Highlights were a **Double-crested Cormorant**, **Snow Geese**, **Spotted Towhee**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, and a **Yellow-headed Blackbird**. There was one Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned

Hawk, and an American Kestrel observed during count week. We had a record high of 6844 Canada Goose, 202 Canvasbacks, 2296 Redheads, 5 (tied) Wilson Snipes, 270 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 161 Dark-eyed Juncos, and 358 Pine Siskins for the count. Thank you to all the wonderful participants who helped make the Bigfork CBC a very enjoyable experience! Contact: Craig Hohenberger, aso-leado2003@yahoo.com

PARTICIPANTS

Rod Walette, Al Johnson, Shawn Richmond, Raylene Wall, Jeanne Carlson, Kathy Ross, Pam Willison, Will Beyer, Rich Pettersen, Bob Lee, Bob Smith, Gael Bissell, Rick Mace, Paula Smith, Jake Bramante, Debbie Moon, Leslie Kehoe, Craig Hohenberger, Denny Olson, Jamie Butkavich, B.J. Worth, Linda Winnie, Rosemary McKinnon, Jean Robocker, Lisa Bate, Cory Davis, Pat Jaquith, Tina Zenzola, Bob Kemp, Chuck Sufert, Dave Manuwal, Michell Tyler, Margaret Parodi

More Christmas Bird Count Results beginning on page 6.

PHENOLOGY NOTE

Dusky Grouse are feeding on high wind-swept mountain ridges.



Conservation Educator's Niche

By Denny Olson

At Flathead Audubon, we have a lot going on these days behind the scenes to build our school field trip presence in our own Owen Sowerwine Natural Area and assisting the Flathead Land Trust and Fish, Wildlife and Parks with in and out-of-classroom student bird education in the West Valley Ponds ("The Cranes, the Cranes!"). So here is more about the "why" of getting kids outdoors as part of their schooling. Why is the outdoor part of a "sense of place" so critical?

In lieu of being outdoors, schools are beginning to address the more generic skills that will prove essential to a sense of place. Problem-solving, listening and observation skills, the ability to work in teams (collaboratively and cooperatively, seeing the value of synergy first-hand), competence with electronic technologies, etc., are being addressed by most of our local schools. Depending on the teacher, some also address critical thinking, healthy skepticism, planning (beyond the short-term and obvious) and life-long learning. The development of science standards is at least partly responsible for these advances.

However, ecological and environmental literacy, and the development of a sense of place, demand a set of skills that are (largely, but not always) missing from the public education framework. To develop these, in all classes and subject areas students should *routinely* (1) seek interconnections between objects and events (thinking about systems), (2) look for the very beginnings of change, (3) evaluate the consequences of potential actions, (4) examine alternatives and make choices among the least-impact possibilities, (5) assume a sense of responsibility to all members of the community, both human and non-human, (6) critically examine *values* issues, (7) distinguish between quantity, quality and actual value, (8) distinguish the virtual (map) from the actual (territory), and (9) modify old conclusions with new facts.

Instead of a plethora of unrelated disciplines, real, community-centered place education operates under the *fact* that all education is "environmental education". It cannot be tucked into science or geography, because our "environment" is the "all and everything" of our existence. Of course, it is extremely difficult to develop cross-disciplinary thinking in a discipline-oriented framework. Environmental education will probably

never realize its potential until the entire school is organized under a basic philosophy which *seeks* the connections between specialties, encourages multi-person team teaching, and fosters the reassembling of narrow specialization back into the big picture.

By contrast, a community-based, place-literacy-focused education system has a very different set of descriptions. The primary objective is the engagement of students in critical thinking and action as citizens. Curriculum focus would be on group learning processes and positive action ("action" does not mean rebellion or a political stance, as some would fear). Ideally, the community, teams of teachers, and the students themselves would be the decision-making body. The main emphasis of this type of education are community linkages, student positive action, small group processes, developing a working knowledge of society and community, and a constructively critical perspective on society and the community. Primarily, it is focused on interaction and empowerment, and learning the *skills* to be a life-long learner. In this model, *self-evaluation* is ongoing as part of the learning process, done primarily by the learner. This "learner", of course, can be any member of the community, not just those of school age.

It's revealing to look at what brought us to here, educationally. For me, my ability to think and write about ideas comes mostly from personal exploration and reading interests, from conversations with people I admire and respect, from solitary walks in the woods and canoe trips, from sitting in tree stands watching the daily activities of deer, bears, ravens and an ecosystem of other animals, from being involved in the politics and spirituality of friends and community, and from practice. Except for paper credibility (diplomas, etc.) I think that fewer of my "qualifications" came from inside school buildings.

This is not meant as an indictment of formal schooling. It is a plea toward the realization that education happens everywhere and all the time, and is much, much broader and deeper than "school". Confining "education" to the school building, television, computers, the city and its suburbs is akin to expecting well-rounded humans to emerge from a sensory deprivation chamber. The key to effective classroom learning may well be getting *out* of the classroom on a regular basis.

There is a bigger world outside, full of life lessons and rich, hair-raising experiences that change the courses of lives, and sometimes even save them. We have two of those world-class outdoor schools right next to us, one in the West Valley and one in the East River-bottom. How about we use them?



WINTER FIELD TRIPS FOR YOU!

All Flathead Audubon field trips are free and open to the public and are geared for all ages and levels of field experience. They are led by area biologists, retired professionals, and some of the best birders in the region. Please read our field trip guidelines at www.FlatheadAudubon.org. For all Field Trips, dress for the weather, bring binoculars or spotting scope if you have them, wear sturdy footwear, and drive and pull off the road safely. All drivers must have their own vehicle insurance. For more information, contact Kathy Ross at 837-3837 or Cory Davis at 257-3166, or the individual field trip leader listed below. Also, a free brochure, "Birding Hotspots of the Flathead" is available at the Flathead Audubon general meetings and on www.FlatheadAudubon.org.



WINTER BIRDS AND TRACKS WITH DENNY OLSON, Saturday, February 9, 2019 10:00 AM-noon. Join FAS Conservation Educator and long-time teaching naturalist Denny Olson on a winter hike in Kalispell. Winter birds, bird songs, tracking, botanizing, and seat-of-the-pants interpretation will be the unstructured itinerary. This is one of the best spots in the area to see Pileated and other woodpeckers, many kinds of chickadees, Bohemian and Cedar waxwings in flocks of thousands, Pine Grosbeaks, Townsend's Solitaires -- and there's always an unexpected bird. Not just ID, but lots of natural history lore, which is Denny's trademark. Dress warm, bring binoculars and snow boots, and check with us on the need for snowshoes if the snow is deep. We have binoculars and field guides if you need them. Call Denny at 249-3987, or contact at auduboneducator@gmail.com to register and get directions.

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT, A Field Trip For Kids And All Ages, EXPLORING THE BIGFORK AND SWAN RIVER AREA, Sunday, February 17, 2019, 10 AM-1 PM. Join us for an exciting morning of birding and learning about our winter avian residents in this area. We will visit local feeders to ID and count our wintering songbirds as part of a yearly nation-wide Citizen Scientist project. Expect to see three species of chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, along with many other feeder surprises. Exploring the river corridor by car we hope to see Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles and perhaps our resident Pygmy Owls. Excellent outing for families with children as well as bird lovers of all ages. Minimal walking to some viewing areas and short periods of standing. Dress warmly, bring binoculars and/or spotting scopes. Contact Kathy Ross for information and to sign up, 406-837-3837 or mtkat67@gmail.com.

FUR AND FEATHERS, TRACKING AND BIRDING THE SWAN RIVER REFUGE WITH DIANE BOYD, Sunday, February 23, 2019, 10 AM-1 PM. , meeting 9:30 AM (Kalispell) or 10 AM (Bigfork). Join wildlife biologist, Diane Boyd and FAS for a day of adventure, on skis or snowshoes, in the Swan Refuge winter wonderland. Diane's experienced tracking skills will bring alive the stories written in the snow of otters, raptors, weasels, coyotes and other refuge residents. Be prepared for winter conditions. The field trip will cover anywhere from 1-5 miles of snow covered landscape and approximately 3- 4 hours on the refuge depending on conditions. Bring a lunch, water, appropriate winter gear and binoculars. For more information and to sign up contact Diane at 406-470-2832 or dianekboyd@gmail.com. Trip limited to 12 participants.

FREEZOUT LAKE AND THE SNOW GEESE MIGRATION, March 23-24, 2019. The Snow Geese are moving from their California wintering grounds to their arctic nesting areas along with thousands of other waterfowl. There is nothing like Snow Geese and the Rocky Mountains at the same time and place. The place is Freezout Lake near Choteau; the time is the annual Flathead Audubon field trip. We will meet on Saturday morning at 10 AM, caravan/carpool to Choteau and arrive in time for the afternoon "fly-out." After spending a night in Choteau, we will head back out just before daybreak to watch the "mass ascension" of geese from the ponds of Freezout. After the morning's birding, we, too, will head home in the early afternoon arriving in Kalispell around 5 PM on Sunday. Bob Lee will provide a suggested schedule and route, and will be in the front of the group. Participants may choose to pursue the geese on their own as much or as little as they, the weather and the birds allow. Please make your own arrangements for lodging; primitive camping is available at Freezout WMA. Motel options include the Stage Stop (406-466-5900), Gunther (406-466-5444) and Big Sky (406-466-5318). Make your reservations early as these hotels will likely fill up. For more information, including the meeting location, contact Bob Lee at 270-0371 or RML3@centurytel.net.

continued on page 8.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

KALISPELL 2018 CBC

The 20th Kalispell Christmas Bird Count was held on Sunday, December 30. Milder than usual weather (28-35° F) and minimal snow cover (2 inches) made for an interesting count.

This count could be dubbed "The Year of the Goose". We encountered astounding numbers of Canada Geese, which were taking full advantage of the exposed farm fields and cropland. The 8,988 birds counted demolished the previous record of 3,211. Thanks to Dick Walker's persistence and keen eye, we were able to record the count's first ever Greater White-fronted Goose (at the junction of Stillwater Road and 4 Mile Drive). A handful of Cack-

ling Geese and a rare Snow Goose rounded out the field of goose species.

A total of 75 species was recorded, a number which is about average for this count. However, several species were found in record numbers. These species included Bald Eagle (105), American Coot (17), Blue Jay (63), White-breasted Nuthatch (11), Cedar Waxwing (345), Dark-eyed Junco (378) and Pine Siskin (740).

Lastly, it was great to see the enthusiasm for this count grow. An impressive 51 field observers and half of a dozen feeder watchers took part. Thanks to all that volunteered their time and energy, it made for a great count.

Happy New Year!, Pete Fisher

2018 EUREKA CBC

The 26th annual Eureka Christmas bird count was held on Saturday, December 15 in mild weather that ranged from 31°F to 41°F. A record 33 field observers and 16 feeder watchers recorded 61 species and 4953 individual birds. The 61 species tied the fifth highest total in our history and the number of individuals was the highest in count history.

A single Ruddy Duck was the only new species observed. Record high counts were recorded for Canada Goose (1014), Common Merganser (102), Common Raven (245), Bald Eagle (35), Eurasian Collared-dove (161), Northern Shrike (6), European Starling (170), Dark-eyed Junco (76), Red Crossbill

(124), and House Sparrow (152).

Bohemian Waxwing (1230) was the most numerous species observed and other most common birds included Canada Goose (1014), Common Raven (212), Mallard (227), and Wild Turkey (197). Only 1-3 individuals were seen for 22 species such as Hooded Merganser, Ruffed Grouse, Horned Grebe, Western Grebe, Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon (only the third time in count history), Blue Jay, and Cedar Waxwing (1 in a flock of hundreds of Bohemians).

Thanks to all the participants for making this another enjoyable CBC!

Lewis Young, Compiler

2018 Troy Christmas Bird Count

Troy's CBC was held on December 15. Weather was mild with Temps ranging between 33° and 39°F. Snow was essentially non-existent except for our higher elevations to the east and west. Thirteen field observers participated with four feeder watchers. Species total was 51 for count day and 58 for count week.

Usually we have our count after Christmas, but schedule conflicts made us have it at an earlier date. With milder weather and an earlier count date we were able to increase our "wetland" viewing due to the lack of ice. Troy has got to be one of the worst places for waterfowl and wetland birds in the winter so mild conditions helped us in viewing a **Trumpeter Swan, Snow Goose, and Wilson's Snipe (2)**. Birds seen during count week but not count day were, Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red Cross-

bill, Golden Eagle, Great Horned Owl, Red-winged Blackbird and Black-billed Magpie. The Magpie may not sound like much to most folks in Montana, but it's the first Magpie I have seen in Troy in 33 years of living here. Other notable species were Saw-whet Owl (nighttime owling), Harris's Sparrow, White-breasted Nuthatch and a larger than normal amount of American Robins (20).

My thanks go out to all who helped in making this count a success (anything above 45 species is a good count for Troy). As always the breakfast and potluck at our house was well attended and a lot of fun. I believe that the birding aspect of the count is number one but I also feel the social benefits of bringing like community members together for such an event are as important as well.

Don Jones

don@donaldmjones.com

Lois Drobish Celebration of Life

Lois Drobish's family invites everyone to a Celebration of Lois's Life on Sunday, February 17, 11:30 am, at the Glacier Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1515 Trumble Creek Road, Kalispell.

The Celebration will begin with a Memorial, where family and friends can share their memories of

Lois. Please bring your favorite Lois story to tell. Following this there will be a potluck. Lois graciously oversaw Flathead Audubon's end-of-year potlucks for 20 years. We thank her family for organizing this one in her memory.

CBC's continued from page 6.

Upper Swan Valley Christmas Bird Count

The Upper Swan Valley Christmas Bird Count was held on December 15th. Clouds gave way to blue sky with breaks of sun, and participants enjoyed mild temperatures in the mid 30s. Snow conditions varied widely from the valley bottom (elevation ~3600', snow depth 2") to the mountains, where skiers and snowshoers encountered fresh powder up to 8" deep.

Our 15 intrepid birders found 287 birds

across 23 species, with black-capped chickadees topping the per species tally at 84 individuals. Most wetlands and lakes were frozen, but the Swan River and local creeks were flowing enough to be relied on for some count week Dippers. Particular highlights of our count included flocks of Bohemian waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks, and even a Great Gray Owl.

We're proud to continue the CBC tradition in the Upper Swan Valley.

Rob Rich, Compiler

PHENOLOGY NOTE

Beavers "dance" more actively on coldest nights to ensure their exit holes don't freeze.



THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

You Can Be Part Of The Team—Every Bird Counts

The 22nd annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) takes place February 15-18, 2019. The GBBC is a free, fun and easy nationwide event that engages bird appreciators of all ages in counting birds to create a real time snapshot of bird populations around the world. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes or spend the day (as long as you wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and then report their sightings on line at birdcount.org. All the instructions to participate are on this website, along

with lots of bird-wise information and a photo contest you can enter. Anyone can take part in the GBBC from beginning bird watchers to experts and you can participate from your own backyard or any where around the world. If you know a local teacher in the valley, consider FAS Adopt-a-School (or classroom) program. The GBBC is a great way to engage young people in the world around them. For more information contact Kathy @837-3837. Become a Citizen Scientist in your own backyard. You count, every bird counts!

New Flathead County Trails Plan

Flathead County Parks, Recreation, and Weed Board members have been reviewing an updated Flathead County Trails Plan that was prepared with assistance of a PATHS2 committee, considerable public input, and numerous public meetings over the last year or so. A coordinated trail system is important to our local economies, getting folks outside, and for conservation/education. The plan updates the County's outdated 2010 Trails Plan and continues to focus on connectivity between existing trail systems and need for coordinating future trails as well as recognizing maintenance issues. The next County Parks, Rec-

reation, and Weed Board meeting is Feb. 4th, 8:30-10:30 AM at 311 FFA Drive (off Willow Glen).

You can see a copy of the plan at the County website https://flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning/documents/8.31.18FCTrailsPlan2018Draft.pdf and see an interactive trail map on the county's arcgis website (<http://flathead.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=653b9965737740d48642397185a38265>).

For more information, contact the County Planning Office or one of the your local trails organizations.



Thank You!...to those below who have made donations to the Flathead Audubon 2018
 "For the Birds Challenge."

Eagle

Anonymous



Osprey

Tannehill/
Cleveland
Julie Baldrige



Snowy Owl

Devonna L.-Devvi-Morgan
Bob Lopp



Merlin

Jennette Oliver
Lewis and Lynda Young
S W Johnson
Kay Mitchell
Jeffrey Thill
Owen David Sowerwine
Rosemary McKinnon
Franklin Schroeter
James Paisley
Jan Metzmaker
Joe and Lana Batts
Rod Walette
Gael Bissell
Carole Jorgensen
Mike and Jill Fanning
Pam Willison



Dennis Hester
Jake Bramante
Paula & Bob Smith
Mary and James Sloan
Joyce Schaub

Kestrel

Carol Bibler
Christine Dye
Laura Katzman
Billy Ann Burch
Jennifer Graham
Mayre Flowers
Beth Schecher
D.L. Blank
Wes and Karen James
Karen Voermans
Sherri Wood
Katherine O'Neil
Joel or Barbara Vignere
Gayle and Ted Chaffey
Todd or Elizabeth Hammer
Diane Boyd
Carol Bibler
Cory Davis
Eileen Carney
Bonnie Eckert
Michael Yelinek
Carroll Lorang



My Own Vision

Barbara Lee
Alan Priebe
Mindy Heinz
Guenter Heinz
Linda Hofman
Mary Jo Gardner
Patricia Archibald
Terry Divoky
J.K. Bourne
Bill Bruzek
Daniel and Bonnie Hodges
Vicki Bodfish
Patricia Jaquith
Diana and Michael Blend
Tom or Stephenne Sue Harding
Richard & Suzanne Hildner
Sue Harper
Karen & Arnold Larsen
Susan Cahill
Lair Reed
Duane Klarich
Helene Michael
Laurel Jane Soennecken



In Memory of Lois Drobish

Karen Nichols
John & Linda Winnie

field trips continued from page 5.

SPRING MIGRATION IN THE LOWER FLATHEAD VALLEY WITH CRAIG HOHENBERGER, Sunday, March 31, 2019, 9AM. Join premier birder Craig Hohenberger and Flathead Audubon exploring the sloughs, wetlands and back roads of the waterfowl-abundant south end of the Flathead Valley. With the diversity of habitat we should find Swans and most species of ducks, along with Bluebirds and other early migrant songbirds. And always raptors! To sign up for this great birding opportunity for folks of all ages and physical capabilities, contact Kathy at 837-3837 or mtkat67@gmail.com. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, and appropriate clothing for changing spring conditions. Field trip is limited to 14 participants.

CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

Highlights from January 7, 2019 Board Meeting

- ◇ Jake Bramante attended the Business of Outdoor Recreation Summit, which is coordinated by the Governor's Office of Outdoor Recreation. He reported on several ways in which we might assist people in becoming more aware of Flathead Audubon, and our programs and activities.
- ◇ Kathy Ross is coordinating a committee to work with FWP to plan and install native plantings at the new West Valley viewing area.
- ◇ Gael Bissell and Kathy Ross met with FWP to continue efforts to improve our ability to conduct a thorough Jewel Basin Hawk Watch next fall.
- ◇ Cory Davis reported that the field trip committee is busy setting the schedule for field trips for the coming spring and summer.
- ◇ Conservation Educator Denny Olson reported on his progress on the bird education and mentoring program, the Education Ambassador training held that afternoon, and the upcoming "Birds Rock" video.

2019 Wings Across the Big Sky Bird Festival

Montana Audubon will host its 20th annual Wings Across the Big Sky bird festival at the Cottonwood Inn, in Glasgow on June 7th-9th, 2019! This longstanding, community event celebrates Montana' native bird species and typically draws hundreds of wildlife enthusiasts from across the state and beyond. For 2019 the festival lead sponsor is American Prairie Reserve (APR).



Numerous field trips are in the works that highlight the remarkable grassland habitats of Montana's highline. The keynote address will be presented on Friday evening by Sean Gerrity, American Prairie Reserve founder, who will discuss the importance of the project to Montana's grassland birds and other species. Additional speakers will discuss conservation issues affecting this ecologically unique region. Native prairies are some of the most threatened habitats on earth: in North America, just over one-percent remains undeveloped. Montana's glaciated plains landscape contains large areas of intact grasslands along with the stunning and fragile birdlife these habitats support. Montana Audubon is proud to host its 20th bird festival in this beautiful, wildlife-rich area of our state.

There are many other fun activities to choose from at *Wings Across the Big Sky* including a Saturday evening banquet, Montana Audubon's annual conservation awards, "Nature Adventure Tour" silent auction, "Cakes for Conservation" fundraiser and more. For more information, visit the Montana Audubon website: www.mtaudubon.org or call 406.443.3949.

Bird Festival in Washington

SAVE THE DATE: Olympic Birdfest, April 12-14, 2019. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction, raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: John Marzluff, professor of wildlife science at the University of Washington and author. Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 9-11, 2019 or extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 14-16, 2019: three days exploring northwest coastal Washington. To learn more and register, visit www.olympicbirdfest.org.

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SPECIAL GIFTS

I wish to help make Flathead Audubon's vision a reality. Here is my contribution to the continued success of our chapter.



- Eagle Donation, \$1000+
- Osprey Donation, \$500+
- Snowy Owl Donation, \$250+
- Merlin Donation, \$100+
- Kestrel Donation, \$50+
- My Own Vision, amount of my choice

The FAS activity which most interests me is:

- Education Programs
- Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
- Scholarships and Grants
- Field Trips and Outdoor Events

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Late breaking FAS news and announcements
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Latest eBird reports on species being observed in the Flathead area



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Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

P.O. Box 9173
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February 2019



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with Montana Audubon and the National Audubon Society. Flathead Audubon meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. Meetings start at 7 PM and include a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meet the Monday preceding the general meeting, at 6 PM at Gateway Community Center, US Hwy 2 West, Kalispell. Both meetings are open to all.

THE PILEATED POST is published September through May and is sent to members of Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. For membership information or address change, please call Mike Fanning at 862-8070. To receive this newsletter electronically, email your request to: lindawin626@gmail.com. Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: lindawin626@gmail.com

Website: www.FlatheadAudubon.org

Conservation Educator - Denny Olson: auduboneducator@gmail.com

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

Table listing officers: President Kay Mitchell, Vice-President Gael Bissell, Secretary Marylane Pannell, Treasurer Joe Batts with contact info.

DIRECTORS

Table listing directors from 2016-2019 to 2018-2019 with names and contact info.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Table listing committee chairs: Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Finance, Donations, Hospitality, Membership with names and phone numbers.

Table listing other roles: Nominations, Natural Area, Newsletter, Program, Publicity, Sales, Refuges, Website with names and phone numbers.

MONTANA AUDUBON

P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624 443-3949 www.MTAudubon.org
Executive Director: Larry Berrin lberrin@mtaudubon.org
Board Member representing FAS, Bob Lee rml3@centurytel.net 270-0371
Bob Lopp, alternate boblopp@bresnan.net 250-7753

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership Individual or Family

- Basic Membership \$25
Supporting Membership \$40
Additional Donation of \$
To: Education Fund, Owen Sowerwine Fund, Wherever needed

Total \$

You may renew or join online on our website:

http://www.flatheadaudubon.org/

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